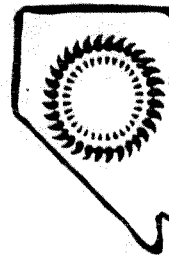


NEVADA CLIMATE SUMMARY



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SYNOPSIS

Temperatures averaged warmer than normal this last month of the year, and except for the South more precipitation fell than is normally the case. For example, Reno had the third wettest December on record (since 1870) and the eighth warmest (since 1888). In the West the pre-Christmas heavy snows and the post Christmas heavy rain on that snow led to the worst flooding conditions in at least the past 40 years during early January 1997.

TEMPERATURE

Departure from normal temperatures ranged from 2 - 6 degrees above average over most of the State. Temperatures rose into the 70's at lower elevations in Southern Nevada, and fell into the -15 to -20° category in the Northeast. For example, Laughlin had 73°, Overton 72° and San Jacinto -20° and Wildhorse -25°.

PRECIPITATION

Only a few locations in the South escaped the state's unusual wetness, as Battle Mountain and Montello had 4 & 1/2 times the December normal, Golconda and Wells 4 times, Beatty 3 & 1/2, Reno, Goldfield and Pioche 3 times, and Boulder City only 1/2 and Las Vegas only 1/4 of normal.

Some of the heaviest amounts were Verdi (near Reno) with 14.69", Incline 13.62", Daggett Pass 12.61", and Genoa 11.60". The Incline total was over twice normal, and topped the old December mark of 11.65 set in 1992 (record began in 1968). The 88 inch snowfall total here was also a record, as was the 40 inch 24 hour total here on the 21st. At lower elevations an unusually heavy 1 & 1/2 to 3" of snow fell a few days before Christmas, but disappeared in a few days because of warm temperatures and heavy rain.

1996 CLIMATE HIGHLIGHTS

FEBRUARY - Record cold in the Northeast. -42° at Wildhorse Reservoir and -41° at Charleston. Old State record -38°.

AUGUST - The wildfires that plagued much of western Nevada for most of the month. Summer heat, dryness and winds added to the fire problem.

OCTOBER - Unprecedented temperature "switcheroo"! New October high readings were reached on the 9th followed by new monthly lows less than two weeks later at many locations. For example Winnemucca 91° to +5°, 125 years of record; Beatty 98 to 18, 50 years of record; Charleston 86 to -15.

DECEMBER - In the west the pre-Christmas heavy snows and the post-Christmas heavy rains on that snow led to the worst flooding conditions in at least the past 40 years during early January 1997.

HOTTEST - Laughlin 118° July
Overton 117° July

COLDEST - Wildhorse (-42°) and Charleston (-41°) - February

BIGGEST HOURLY SWITCH - San Jacinto 21° to 87° - a 66° rise in 7 hours on August 20th.

1995 - 96 WATER YEAR (ending September 30th) -

Wettest 46.35" Angel Lake (130% of normal) at 8000' in Elko County.

Driest 1.01" Pahump (20% of normal) (Goldpoint had 1.02").

Highest percent of normal - Minden (155%).

John W. James
State Climatologist

Marla Griswold has been the official State weather observer at Boies Ranch in Elko County for the past several years. Born and raised in California, she met her husband while both were attending the University of Nevada. She has called Elko County home since 1953, and has three children and seven grandchildren. Thanks for a great job as weather observer, Marla.



Shirley Hesselschwerdt has been the making weather readings for the past several years at Red Rock Valley (NW of Reno). The former Illinois and California resident came to Nevada ten years ago. She has one daughter and two grandchildren. The -35° of December 1990 has left a lasting mark on her memory. Thanks Shirley for being an outstanding weather observer.

